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93. The method of claim 92, wherein the set of travel policies includes a project policy, an employee policy, a negotiated hotel rate policy, and an enterprise-preferred vendor policy such that, when determining whether the travel plan complies with the set of travel policies, compliance of the travel plan with the project policy takes precedence over the employee policy, the negotiated hotel rate policy, and the negotiated hotel rate policy takes precedence over the enterprise-preferred vendor policy.--

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action of October 5, 1999, and considered the Examiner's helpful comments found therein.

With respect to the status of the claims, Applicants have amended claims 1-20, 26-31, 33, 36, 37, 39, 41-44, 47-51, 57-59, 64-67, 70, and 73-75 to clarify the claimed invention and correct minor informalities and added new claims 76-93 to further identify the subject matter to which Applicants are entitled to protection. Therefore, claims 1-93 are currently pending.

Applicants also have amended the title of the invention and the specification in order to correct minor informalities. In making these amendments, no new matter has been added to the originally filed disclosure.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-75 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as

being unpatentable over Shoolery et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,570,283) according to the rationales discussed on pages 2-8 of the Office Action.

Shoolery et al., however, does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse these grounds of rejection.

As discussed throughout the specification, the instant invention provides a number of practical advantages that are neither present in nor apparent from the prior art, (see e.g., Background of the Invention and the Summary of the Invention). For example, the specification states that "[m]any of the limitations on the current corporate travel planning and management systems stem from the corporate traveler's dependence on travel management firms," (page 5, lines 4-6). In order overcome these exemplary limitations, the specification describes a corporate travel planning and management system that allows the traveler to perform, among other things, automated travel planning and management from the corporate traveler's desktop and inform the corporation of "planned travel expenditures before corporate dollars are spent," (page 5, lines 13-19). It should be understood, however, that the invention is not limited to these illustrative examples found in the specification. Rather, the invention is intended to cover all modifications and variations that come within the scope of the claims.

With this in mind, each of the independent claims, i.e., claims 1, 12, 18, 20, 36, 48, 49, 57, 64-67, 70, 73, 75, and 92, are drawn to separate and distinct combinations

of elements that patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art.

For example, independent apparatus claim 1, as amended, recite a combination including, among other things, a "traveler planning, expense reporting and travel management system [that] is configured for selectively allowing the traveler to complete a travel reservation and communicate the completed travel reservation to the travel agency for post reservation processing," (independent claim 1, lines 11-14; see *also* independent apparatus claim 18, as amended, lines 13-20; independent apparatus claim 57, as amended, lines 6-9; independent apparatus claim 66, as amended, lines 13-16; independent apparatus claim 70, as amended, lines 11-14).

As another example, independent method claim 12, as amended, recites another combination including, *inter alia*, the steps of "receiving from the traveler a completed travel reservation based on the traveler's approved travel plan; and communicating the completed travel reservation to the travel agency for post reservation processing," (independent claim 12, lines 16-17; see *also* independent method claim 20, as amended, lines 8-10; independent method claim 36, as amended, lines 9-11; independent method claim 48, lines 8-9; claim 49, lines 6-8; independent method claim 64, as amended, lines 7-9; independent method claim 65, as amended, lines 12-15; independent method claim 67, as amended, lines 9-11; independent method claim 73, as amended, lines 5-8; independent method claim 75, as amended, lines 6-10).

In addition, new independent method claim 92 recites yet another combination

including, among other steps, the step of "determining whether the travel plan complies with a set of travel policies according to a travel policy hierarchy that defines a relationship between each travel policy within the set of travel policies," (new claim 92, lines 4-6).

At the very least, Shoolery et al. fails to disclose or suggest any of these exemplary features recited in the independent claims.

Shoolery et al. discloses a system for controlling travel. In particular, Shoolery et al.'s corporate travel controller allows a traveler "to obtain schedule information and transfer such to a travel agent," (abstract, lines 4-5). However, Shoolery et al. fails to provide any disclosure or any suggestion of the claimed "traveler planning, expense reporting and travel management system" that is configured for "selectively allowing the traveler to complete a travel reservation and communicate the completed travel reservation to the travel agency for post reservation processing," (*supra*). Instead, Shoolery et al. teaches away from the claimed invention by ensuring that "the travel agent can use the selected schedule information for ticketing and to assure the lowest cost while the entire trip information is stored locally for management control," (abstract, lines 5-8 (emphasis added)). Moreover, Shoolery et al. fails to disclose or suggest the claimed step of determining travel plan compliance in accordance with the claimed travel policy hierarchy, (see *supra* (discussing exemplary features of independent method claim 92)). Rather, the Shoolery et al. device communicates a travel itinerary to

a supervisor without any disclosure or suggestion of employing the claimed travel policy hierarchy to determine travel compliance, (see, e.g., col. 7, lines 48-50 (discussing how a travel agent sends a travel itinerary, via central server 42, "to a supervisor's workstation 34 . . . to receive approval" without the use of any hierarchy for determining travel compliance). Consequently, Shoolery et al. not only fails to disclose or suggest each and every element recited in the independent claims, but also teaches away from the claimed invention.

For at least these reasons, Shoolery et al. fails to disclose or render obvious each and every element recited in independent claims 1, 12, 18, 20, 36, 48, 49, 57, 64-67, 70, 73, 75, and 92. Moreover, claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, 21-36, 37-47, 50-56, 58-63, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74-78, 80-91, and 93, which all depend on one of the independent claims, respectively, recite additional limitations that are neither disclosed nor suggested by each of the applied references, taken either alone or in combination. Thus, each of the dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of all the pending claims 1-93.

Additionally, Examiner Poinvil is invited to telephone the undersigned Applicants' representatives at (202) 408-6052 if necessary to further expedite the prosecution of

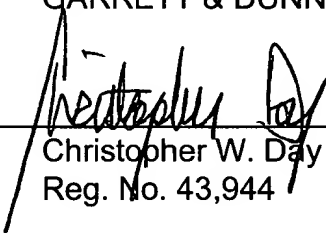
this application. In particular, if the Examiner discovers any new objections and/or rejections, then Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner telephone the undersigned Applicants' representatives in order to better understand and resolve any disagreement, and, thereby, save additional time and expense in the prosecution of this application.

Please grant any necessary extensions of time and charge any additional fees due with the filing of this Amendment to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
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By: _____


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